

This listing of claims will replace the originally filed claims in the application.

Listing of Claims:

Claims 1-12 (canceled) :

Claim 13 (currently amended) : A unit for separating gas by cryogenic distillation, comprising a system of columns, means for sending a gas to be separated to one column of the column system, means for withdrawing at least one product from the column system, means for sending a gas of the unit ~~possibly at least one portion of the gas mixture to be separated~~, into a turbine with bearings, and means for sending at least one portion of the gas expanded in the turbine to one column of the column system if the expanded gas constitutes at least one portion of the gas mixture to be separated, characterized in that the bearings of the turbine are rolling bearings, and wherein the turbine is installed at least one meter above the floor.

Claim 14 (previously presented) : The unit as claimed in claim 13, in which the turbine has unrolled bearings.

Claim 15 (previously presented) : The unit as claimed in claim 14, in which the turbine has unlubricated bearings.

Claim 16 (currently amended) : The unit as claimed in claim 13, in which the gas to be separated contains at least one member selected from the group consisting of oxygen, nitrogen, hydrogen, methane, and carbon monoxide ~~oxygen and/or nitrogen and/or hydrogen and/or methane and/or carbon monoxide~~ as main components.

Claim 17 (previously presented) : The unit as claimed in claim 16, in which the expanded gas is air, nitrogen or hydrogen.

Claim 18 (currently amended) : The unit as claimed in claim 13, in which the turbine is installed ~~at least one meter above the floor, preferably at least two meters above the floor or even at least five meters above the floor.~~

Claim 19 (currently amended) : The unit as claimed in claim 13, in which the turbine is braked by a brake booster ~~possibly of the centrifugal type~~, placed on the same shaft as the turbine, all the bearings of this common shaft being unlubricated.

Claim 20 (previously presented) : The unit as claimed in claim 19, in which all the bearings of the common shaft are of the rolling bearing type.

Claim 21 (previously presented) : The unit as claimed in claim 13, in which the turbine is braked by a brake generator whose bearings are unlubricated.

Claim 22 (previously presented) : The unit as claimed in claim 21, in which the bearings of the brake generator are of the magnetic type.

Claim 23 (previously presented) : A method of separating a gas mixture by cryogenic distillation, in which a gas mixture to be separated is sent to a column of a column system, at least one product is withdrawn from the column system, at least one portion of a gas of the unit, possibly at least one portion of the gas mixture to be separated, is sent into a turbine with bearings, characterized in that the bearings of the turbine are rolling bearings.

Claim 24 (previously presented) : The method as claimed in claim 23, in which the turbine is braked by a brake generator whose bearings are unlubricated and the brake generator is driven at the same speed as the turbine.

Claim 25 (new) : The unit of claim 13, wherein said means for sending a gas of the unit into a turbine with bearings comprises at least one portion of the gas mixture to be separated.

Claim 26 (new) : The unit of claim 13, in which the turbine is installed at least five meters above the floor.

Claim 27 (new) : The unit of claim 19, wherein said brake booster, is of the centrifugal type